Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel Claims 2, 8 and 14 without prejudice.

Please amend the claims as shown below. This Listing of Claims will replace prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for processing images comprising the steps of:

obtaining image data units and attribute information thereof;

selecting a first image data unit from the image data units as a reference for measuring a similarity index;

comparing attribute information of the first image data unit with attribute information of the remaining image data units other than the first image data unit to determine a second image data unit to be used for measuring the similarity index, the second image data unit being determined by excluding, from a subject for measuring the similarity index, image data units having different attribute information from attribute information of the first image data in terms of pan angles, tilt angles, and zoom angles of a camera being used during capturing the image data units; and

measuring the similarity index between the first image data unit and the second image data unit.

2. (canceled)

3. (original) A method for processing images according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

splitting each of the first image data unit and the second image data unit into a plurality of blocks; and

measuring the similarity index between the first image data unit and the second image data unit on a block-to-block basis.

4. (original) A method for processing images according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

specifying a region for measuring the similarity index in the first image data unit; and

measuring the similarity index between the specified region in the first image data unit and the corresponding region in the second image data unit.

5. (original) A method for processing images according to claim 4, further comprising the steps of:

splitting each of the first image data unit and the second image data unit into a plurality of blocks; and

specifying at least one block to specify the region in the first image data unit.

6. (currently amended) A method for processing images comprising the steps of:

obtaining image data units;

selecting a first image data unit as a reference for measuring a similarity index and specifying a region for measuring the similarity index in the first image data unit;

specifying a region in a second image data unit in the remaining image data units other than the first image data unit, the region in the second image data unit corresponding to the specified region in the first image data unit, the second image data unit being determined by excluding, from a subject for measuring the similarity index, image data units having different attribute information from attribute information of the first image data in terms of pan angles, tilt angles, and zoom angles of a camera being used during capturing the image data units; and

measuring the similarity index between the specified region in the first image data unit and the specified corresponding region in the second image data unit.

7. (currently amended) An apparatus for processing image comprising:

obtaining means for obtaining image data units and attribute information thereof;

image-storing means for storing the image data units;

attribute-storing means for storing the attribute information;

selecting means for selecting an image data unit as a reference for measuring a similarity index;

excluding means for excluding an image data unit that is not to be used for measuring the similarity index from the image data units by comparing attribute information of the selected image data unit with the attribute information stored in the attribute-storing means, the second image data unit being determined by excluding, from a subject for measuring the similarity index, image data units having different attribute information from attribute information of the first image data in terms of pan angles, tilt angles, and zoom angles of a camera being used during capturing the image data units; and

similarity-measuring means for measuring the similarity index between the selected image data unit and an image data unit that is not excluded by the excluding means.

8. (canceled)

9. (original) An apparatus for processing images according to claim 7 further comprising splitting means for splitting the image data units into a plurality of blocks, wherein the similarity-measuring means measures the similarity index between the image data unit selected by the selecting means and an image data unit that is stored in the image-storing means and that is not excluded by the excluding means.

10. (original) An apparatus for processing images according to claim 7 further comprising region-specifying means for specifying a region in the image data unit for measuring the similarity index, wherein the similarity-measuring means measures the similarity index between the specified region in the image data unit selected by the selecting means and the corresponding region in an image data that is stored in the image-storing means and that is not excluded by the excluding means.

11. (original) An apparatus for processing images according to claim 10 further comprising splitting means for splitting the image data units into a plurality of blocks, wherein the region-specifying means specifies at least one block to specify the region in the image data unit for measuring the similarity index.

12. (currently amended) An apparatus for processing images comprising:

obtaining means for obtaining image data units;

image-storing means for storing the image data units;

selecting means for selecting an image data unit as a reference for measuring similarity index and for specifying a region for measuring the similarity index in the selected image data unit;

specifying means for specifying a region in an image data unit in the remaining image data units stored in the image-storing means, the region in the image data unit corresponding to the specified region in the selected image data unit, the second image data unit being determined by excluding, from a subject for measuring the similarity index, image data units having different attribute information from attribute information of the first image data in terms of pan angles, tilt angles, and zoom angles of a camera being used during capturing the image data units; and

similarity-measuring means for measuring the similarity index between the specified region in the selected image data unit and the specified corresponding region in the image data unit.

13. (currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium having a program stored thereon for making a computer execute the steps of:

obtaining image data units and attribute information thereof;

selecting a first image data unit from the image data units as a reference for measuring a similarity index;

comparing attribute information of the first image data unit with attribute information of the remaining image data units other than the first image data unit to determine a second image data unit to be used for measuring the similarity index, the second image data unit being determined by excluding, from a subject for measuring the similarity index, image data units having different attribute information from attribute information of the first image data in terms of pan angles, tilt angles, and zoom angles of a camera being used during capturing the image data units; and

measuring the similarity index between the first image data unit and the second image data unit.

14. (canceled)